

PATENT
Attorney Docket No. 214327

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re Application of:

Verschueren et al.

Application No. Unassigned

Art Unit: Unassigned

Filed: November 8, 2001

Examiner: Unassigned

For: APPARATUS FOR AUTOMATIC PLATE-
COATING AND CLEANING

PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT

Commissioner for Patents
Washington, D.C. 20231

Dear Sir:

Prior to the examination of the above-identified patent application, please enter the following amendments and consider the following remarks.

AMENDMENTS

IN THE SPECIFICATION:

Please insert as a title at the top of page 1:

-- APPARATUS FOR AUTOMATIC PLATE COATING AND CLEANING--

After the title on page 1, please insert the following paragraph:

-- This application claims the benefit of U.S. Provisional Patent Application No. 60/252,550, filed November 22, 2000, which is incorporated by reference. --

IN THE CLAIMS

Replace the indicated claims with:

7. (Amended) A printing system comprising a lithographic printing press and a plate-making apparatus according to claim 1.

REMARKS

Conclusion

The application is considered in good and proper form for allowance, and the Examiner is respectfully requested to pass this application to issue. If, in the opinion of the Examiner, a telephone conference would expedite the prosecution of the subject application, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned attorney.

Respectfully submitted,



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Date: November 8, 2001

In re Appln. of Verschueren et al.
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CERTIFICATE OF MAILING

I hereby certify that this PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT (along with any documents referred to as being attached or enclosed) is being deposited with the United States Postal Service on the date shown below with sufficient postage as first class mail in an envelope addressed to: Commissioner for Patents, Washington, D.C. 20231.

Date: Nov. 8, 2001

Virginia Schejile

PATENT
Attorney Docket No. 214327

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**AMENDMENTS TO SPECIFICATION, CLAIMS, AND ABSTRACT
MADE VIA PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT**

Amendments to existing claims:

7. (Amended) A printing system comprising a lithographic printing press and a plate-making apparatus according to [any of the preceding claims] claim 1.

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PENDING CLAIMS AFTER ENTRY OF PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT

1. An off-press plate-making apparatus comprising :

- means for applying on a substrate a continuous image-recording layer which is capable of forming a lithographic image upon exposure to heat or light and optional processing; and
- means for removing the lithographic image from the substrate.

2. An off-press plate-making apparatus according to claim 1 which further comprises :

- means for exposing the image-recording layer to heat or light; and, optionally,
- means for processing the exposed image-recording layer.

3. A plate-making apparatus according to claim 1 wherein the means for applying a continuous image-recording layer on a substrate comprise a spray nozzle or an ink-jet nozzle for applying a coating solution on the substrate.

4. A plate-making apparatus according to claim 1 wherein the means for removing the lithographic image from the substrate comprise a spray nozzle or an ink-jet nozzle for applying a cleaning liquid on the substrate.

5. A plate-making apparatus according to claim 1 further comprising means for preparing an emulsion by mixing an organic liquid with an aqueous liquid.

6. A plate-making apparatus according to claim 1 further comprising means for separating an emulsion in an organic phase and an aqueous phase.

7. A printing system comprising a lithographic printing press and a plate-making apparatus according to claim 1.

8. A printing system according to claim 7 wherein the plate-making apparatus is mechanically coupled to the printing press by plate-loading means for transferring a printing plate precursor or a printing master from the plate-making apparatus to the printing press and/or by plate-unloading means for transferring a printing master from the printing press to the plate-making apparatus.

9. A printing system according to claim 8 wherein the printing press is a multi-color printing press and wherein the plate-loading means and/or the plate-unloading means comprise a stacking apparatus.

10. A printing system according to claim 9 wherein the stacking apparatus is integrated in the plate-making apparatus.